



The Dunn Report

AN ELECTRONIC UPDATE FROM CONGRESSWOMAN JENNIFER DUNN

SEVERING THE 8TH DISTRICT SINCE 1992

Friday, September 26, 2003

DID YOU KNOW...?

...EDUCATION

The Islander Middle School in Mercer Island, Laura Ingalls Wilder Elementary School in Woodinville and Newport High School in Bellevue were among the 215 schools nationwide that were selected for the Department of Education Blue Ribbon Award.



Congresswoman Jennifer Dunn (R-WA-08) and Congressman Rick Larsen (D-WA-02) with representatives from the Restaurant Neighbor Award Winner, Anthony's Restaurants. The restaurant chain won \$5,000 for its community service programs from the National Restaurant Association.

...LOCAL RESTAURANT WINS AWARD

Anthony's Restaurants was a recipient of the 2003 Restaurant Neighbor Award given annually by the National Restaurant Association. Anthony's was one of three national winners. The three national winners received \$5,000 to help the restaurant continue its community service programs.



Jennifer on the floor debating H.R. 1308, The All-American Tax Relief Act of 2003.

...TAX RELIEF

H.R. 1308, The All-American Tax Relief Act of 2003, would increase the child tax credit to \$1,000 per eligible child through 2010. The legislation also suspends the tax-exempt status of designated terrorist organizations. It also provides tax relief and enhances tax fairness for Members of the Armed Forces.

...FORESTRY BONDS

The forestry bonds program will allow non-profit groups to purchase forestry land with bonds issued by the state. Bonding authority is capped at \$250 million. The land that is purchased will be subject to a conservation easement, while timber harvesting will continue in order to pay off the bonds.

CONGRESSIONAL SNAPSHOT

HOMELAND SECURITY

Unlike other terrorist attacks that can be readily seen, the American public, policy makers, and others may not realize that a *bioterror* event is underway until significant numbers of patients are treated for symptoms associated with a particular pathogen.

On September 24th, Congresswoman Dunn, Vice Chair of the Select Committee on Homeland Security, participated in a subcommittee hearing that examined disease surveillance systems that support communications for public health labs, the clinical community and state and local health departments. These groups are responsible for tracking patient medical records - in compliance with privacy regulations - to look for clusters of symptoms that could point to a biological attack. The hearing also looked at the role of primary care physicians and their level of preparedness in the event of a such an attack.

Key elements of public health's current surveillance systems include awareness and diagnosis of a condition of public health importance, whether by a physician or laboratory, with subsequent notification of the local and state health departments, and the CDC. Among the witnesses, Joseph Henderson, associate director of Terrorism Preparedness and Response for the Centers for Disease Control, spoke of the CDC's increased collaboration with the Department of Homeland Security in regard to sharing critical information. As Vice Chair, Congresswoman Dunn has been actively working to ensure greater information sharing across agencies that have homeland security responsibilities.

H.R. 7

The House of Representatives passed Jennifer's forestry bonds initiative on September 17th with sweeping bipartisan support. The forestry bonds initiative would establish a pilot project in Washington State to allow a non-profit organization composed of public officials, conservation groups and industry representatives to purchase forest and forestland for conservation. The purchase of lands would be through tax-exempt bonds. The Joint Tax Committee estimates the 10-year cost of the provision at \$61 million.

"Today's Committee action marks the culmination of efforts by a extensive coalition of conservation groups, public officials and industry representatives to find a collaborative solution to land use issues in our state," said Congresswoman Dunn. "By reaching an agreement on this new way to conserve our forests, while protecting worker's jobs, we have set an important precedent in preserving our natural resources for generations to come."

As provided by Section 207 of Chairman Thomas' bill, Congresswoman Dunn included a provision in H.R. 7, the Charitable Giving Act of 2003 to allow non-profit groups to purchase forestry land by issuing \$250 million in bonds. Stipulations have been included in the legislation that will mandate the land be subject to conservation easement in perpetuity, that timber harvest continues and ensures that the public is engaged in the decision-making process as the implementation of this plan moves forward.

CONGRESSIONAL SNAPSHOT

TAX RELIEF

Congresswoman Dunn managed debate on the House Floor on September 25 in support of H.R. 1308 *All American Tax Relief Act*, which was passed by the House earlier this year. This important legislation includes increasing the child tax credit through the end of the decade, H.R. 1308 not only increases the child credit to \$1000 through 2010, but also eliminates the marriage penalty in the tax credit. In addition, the House-passed bill provides more tax relief to military families through \$806 million in military tax benefits. These provisions have passed the House on numerous occasions and are awaiting action in the Senate.

In her remarks on the Floor, Jennifer voiced her opposition to the Democratic motion that would reduce the child credit in 2 years instead of maintaining the credit at \$1,000 and making it permanent. Any family that pays income tax is eligible for the child tax credits, so long as their income doesn't exceed certain levels. So-called "wealthy families" do not get the child credit.

In July, the child tax credit checks were sent out to about 25 million families nationwide. As a result of this \$350 billion tax package that was signed by the President in May, each of these families has received an average of \$580. Putting these dollars back into the pockets of taxpayers had an immediate, positive effect on the economy. That same month, retail sales increased 1.4 percent - marking the biggest jump in four months and one that exceeded analyst expectations.

Economists believe that the child tax rebates, coupled with larger paychecks from a reduction in the tax rate, have left people with extra money to spend that has spurred this new growth.

HOMELAND SECURITY

Congresswoman Dunn's vision of a Homeland Security Department built on an intense partnership with the private sector is becoming reality. This week, the Department of Homeland Security announced the creation of the U.S. Computer Emergency Response Team (US-CERT). The US-CERT will begin as a partnership between the National Cyber Security Division of Homeland Security and Carnegie Mellon's CERT Coordination Center and will eventually grow to include other partnerships with the private sector security vendors.

As Vice Chair of the Select Committee on Homeland Security, the Congresswoman is pleased that the Department is keeping in mind the interconnectivity of America's technological infrastructure with the world's financial markets, transportation and communication systems. Congresswoman Dunn continues to press the Department for further indications that they are committed to working closely with the private sector with regard to cyber security to reach a clear understanding of what a safe network looks like as a series of hearings on critical infrastructure continues this week.

The federal pilot legislation passed the House as a part of H.R. 1308 in March of 2003. The Senate passed similar legislation in May of 2003 as a part of S. 476, the CARE Act of 2003.

DISTRICT EVENTS

ANTHONY'S RESTAURANT WINS NATIONAL AWARD

On September 16th the National Restaurant Association honored Anthony's Restaurants with the 2003 Restaurant Neighbor Award. The prestigious national award honors restaurants that go above and beyond in community service and aims to inspire other restauranteurs to get or stay involved in their local communities. Anthony's Restaurants was one of three national winners.

Congresswoman Dunn attended the Association's Public Affairs Conference in Washington, DC and helped honor the locally based restaurants. "The local philanthropic activities of Anthony's Restaurants reflect the commitment of state and national restaurant associations in reaching out to their communities," said Jennifer. "I applaud Bud Gould for his continued dedication to our community and offer congratulations on this well-deserved award."

The three national winners of this award each receive \$5,000 to help the restaurant continue its community programs. A profile of the community-service efforts of each national winner is highlighted on the Association's web site at www.restaurant.org/community.

LOCAL SCHOOLS WIN DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AWARD

Congresswoman Jennifer Dunn on September 16th, announced that three local schools have been selected to receive the U.S. Department of Education's *No Child Left Behind – Blue Ribbon Schools Award*. The Islander Middle School in Mercer Island, Laura Ingalls Wilder Elementary School in Woodinville and Newport High School in Bellevue were among the 215 schools nationwide that were selected for this distinction.

The *No Child Left Behind – Blue Ribbon Schools Award* honors public and private K – 12 schools that are academically superior in their state or demonstrate dramatic gains in student achievement. The program requires schools to meet one of two assessment criteria: It recognizes schools that have at least 40 percent of their students from disadvantaged backgrounds that dramatically improve student performance in accordance with state assessment systems; and it rewards schools that score in the top 10 percent on state assessments.

The selected schools will be recognized at a national ceremony in Washington, DC this October.